

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Due to the length of the specification herein, Applicants will cite to the paragraph number of the published patent application (PG Pub) of the present application, i.e., US 2005/0256264, when discussing the application description, both in this section and in the Remarks section, *infra*, rather than to page and line of the specification as filed.

Claim 7 has been amended by incorporating the subject matter of Claim 28 therein, and inserting a ratio, as supported in the specification at paragraph [0042]; Claims 28 and 30 have been canceled.

No new matter is believed to have been added by the above amendment. Claims 7-14, 23-27 and 29 are now pending in the application.

REMARKS

The rejection of Claims 7-14 and 23-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over WO 01/908818 [sic, WO 01/90818] (Morren et al) in view of EP 0013139 (Arbit), is respectfully traversed.

Morren et al discloses a flexographic printing plate obtained by crosslinking a composition containing a block copolymer, a plasticizer, an ethylenically unsaturated monomer and a photo-initiator by exposure to actinic radiation, where the block copolymer comprises a mono-vinyl aromatic block, with styrene being the most preferred monomer (paragraph bridging pages 5 and 6), and a polymerized conjugated diene block. In addition, while Morren et al lists “liquid polyolefins” among applicable plasticizers therein, such as polyisoprene, with polyisoprene being preferred (page 7, lines 3-30), Morren et al neither discloses nor suggests the presence of the presently-recited polyolefin resin (II), i.e., one selected from the group of consisting of high density polyethylene, middle density polyethylene, low density polyethylene, polypropylene, ethylene-propylene copolymer and ethylene- α -olefin copolymer. Nor obviously is there any disclosure in Morren et al of a mass ratio of the block copolymer and the presently-recited polyolefin resin.

Arbit discloses a blend of poly(p-methylstyrene) with low molecular weight polyolefins or olefin copolymers which can be crosslinked by ionizing radiation at low dosage levels (page 1, first paragraph). Arbit further discloses comparative data regarding gel content when a mixture of poly(p-methylstyrene) and polyethylene are irradiated compared to analogous compositions using polystyrene instead of poly(p-methylstyrene).

The Examiner continues to hold that it would have been obvious to employ an alkyl styrene, such as p-methylstyrene, in the block copolymers disclosed by Morren et al in order to provide crosslinking of the alkyl styrene blocks, as disclosed by Arbit.

Applicants have previously replied, and still maintain, that it is clear from Morren et al that the curing or crosslinking obtained therein is intended to be via their component (c), i.e., an ethylenically unsaturated radically polymerizable agent which is at least partially compatible with their polymer blocks A, in view of the fact that styrene is disclosed as the preferable mono-vinyl aromatic monomer for blocks A therein. Thus, without the present disclosure as a guide, one skilled in the art would not have combined Arbit with Morren et al, because the greater crosslinking obtained in Arbit with the use of p-methylstyrene is not something desired by Morren et al.

Nevertheless, the above-discussed amendment further distinguishes over the applied prior art, for reasons stated.

Furthermore, regarding the comparative data in the specification, Applicants continue to submit that it shows unexpected improvement when an alkyl styrene, such as p-methylstyrene, is used in place of the preferred styrene of Morren et al for polymer block A.

The Examiner finds that improvement in % heat deformation relied upon is shown only when the mass ratio of block copolymer to polyethylene is 20:80.

In reply, while there is no data for % heat deformation for ratios other than 20:80, comparing Example 3 or 4 (Table 1) with Comparative Examples 9 or 10 (Table 3) demonstrates much higher deformation temperatures for the Examples when the corresponding ratio is 50:50, thus demonstrating improved heat resistance. At any rate, there is no *prima facie* case of obviousness, so Applicants are under no burden to demonstrate unexpected results for all ratios within the terms of the present claims.

For all the above reasons, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

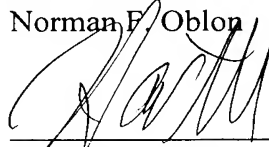
Applicants note the Examiner's statement that "[a]mendment of claim 7 to include the limitations of claims 28 and 29 would be favorably considered." To that end, the above-

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discussed amendment incorporates the limitations of claim 28 and a ratio somewhat broader than that recited in Claim 29 into Claim 7. Nevertheless, for reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the presently-pending claims in this application are now in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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